



The COVID-19 Response



Impacts of the Corona Virus pandemic on Public Works have been varied. The Department’s role in the community’s emergency response means much work continues with adaptations. Services like Water Pollution Control (sewage treatment) are essential and must continue unabated. Some tasks have been temporarily suspended and several were minimally impacted. Protocols around all activities are revisited with each change in Center for Disease Control (CDC) & State Department of Public Health (DPH) guidance. Here are some examples of Public Works’ response by area:

Roads & Streets / Fleet

- Limit one employee per vehicle
- Increasingly smaller size work groups, with social distancing
- Modified schedules to avoid congregating
- Supporting Human Services food service distribution

Facilities

- Increased cleaning with focus on high-touch surfaces
- Disinfectant fogging (aerosolized cleaning touches all surfaces)
- Signage promoting social distancing and hand washing

Water Pollution Control Facility

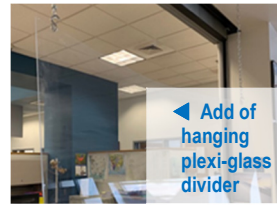
- An essential function—must remain operational
- Implemented social distancing
- Routine maintenance being postponed as practicable

Town Hall Annex Administration, Engineering, Sustainability / Schools

- All internal and external meetings done via teleconferencing
- Some employees working remotely
- Transfer Station permit processing by mail only

Flanders Road Transfer Station

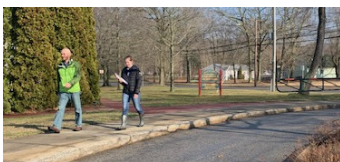
- Employees using PPE and practicing social distancing
- Keeping normal operating hours
- Closure of “Give and Take” Shed



The Town of Groton and its Public Works Department has relied heavily on the expertise and leadership of Ledge Light Health District—and, like everyone-- has had to adapt quickly to changing conditions. Above, some pictures of various states of interventions to protect workers and the public.



UCONN CLIMATE CORPS STUDY



A four-member team from the UCONN CLIMATE CORPS program spent the afternoon in Groton on March 13th. The team was comprised of undergraduates Jillian Leger & Jordan Russo and faculty Chet Arnold and Dave Dixon, from the UConn Center for Land Use Education & Research (CLEAR) and CT Sea Grant. The crew came from Storrs to review the suitability of sites-- selected by the students using GIS data—which might offer opportunities for the Town to disconnect “impervious cover” (hard non-absorbent surfaces) from the stormwater system.

“Disconnection” is the adding of filtration or redirecting of rainwater away from storm drains. This reduces pollution and urban runoff which contributes to flooding. It is an obligation under

the Town’s ‘MS4’ (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System), a mandatory permit issued by CT DEEP (Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection). A second visit was scheduled but cancelled soon thereafter. As part of course-work the students will report findings to the Town in May using available information.

KEY IN A CRISIS



- SNOW
- SANITATION
- ROADS
- ENGINEERING
- TREES
- REFUSE

Public Works employees are part of the emergency response community and **work together** with police and fire departments and telecommunications, medical, and public health professionals to support disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.